

Minutes: Meeting to Discuss [Children's Network Policy Council]

Date, time, and place Date: January 25, 2006
Time: noon
Place: County Government Center, 385 N. Arrowhead Ave., 5th Floor, Citrus Room, San Bernardino

Attendees Charles Adams, Community Action Partnership
Sandra Baxter, County Counsel
Jeff Broyde, Public Defender
Cathy Cimbalo, Department of Children's Services
Margaret Easley, Department of Public Health
Jim Felten, Department of Public Health
Dr. Eric Frykman, Department of Public Health
Dr. Gerald Greene, Arrowhead Regional Medical Center
Ron Griffin, Preschool Services
Jerry Harper, Probation Department
Linda Haugan, Human Services
Kimm Hurley-Smith, Department of Behavioral Health
Honorable James McGuire
Clark Morrow, Sheriff's Department
Kent Paxton, Children's Network
Allan Rawland, Department of Behavioral Health
Ed Rowe, Children's Network
Rebecca Stafford, Children's Fund
Julian Weaver, County Superintendent of Schools
Kimura Shinko, Human Services
Elaine Zucco, First 5 San Bernardino
George Post, Probation
Roberto Lomeli, Sheriff's Department
Tammy Williams, Children's Network

Approval of previous minutes Judge McGuire welcomed everyone and self-introductions were made. A motion was made to approve the agenda as it was submitted. A motion was made to approve the November minutes as submitted.

Topics discussed The table below identifies the topics discussed in the meeting and the person who led each discussion.

Topic	Discussion Leader
Approval of Agenda	McGuire
Approval of November Minutes	McGuire
Children's Fund Report	Stafford
Child Welfare Services Self-Assessment Team Report	Thomson
Discussion/Action Requested to move forward with the 2006 Group Home Needs Assessment	Paxton/Watkins
Discussion/Action Requested to Review the Group Home Letters of Support Process	Paxton
Other	All
Public Comment	All

**Key points:
Children's
Fund Report**

The following highlights were given:

- Rebecca Stafford reported they do not have the final numbers yet, served an excess of 33,000 children with donations of 68,000 toys and cash donations of \$52,000.
- *First 5 San Bernardino contracted with The Children's Fund to provide \$25,000 worth of developmentally appropriate toys for children 0 –5.*
- A lot of Christmas gifts were distributed earlier this year, so there were many more rave reviews from the caseworkers last year.
- Rebecca mentioned that a husband and wife recently died and named in their will a gift for Children's Fund Sugar Plum. Rebecca stated that is a testament to Cathy Cimbalo's case workers and that this couple felt there is a value to give Christmas gifts to foster children.

**Key points:
Child Welfare
Services Self-
Assessment
Team Report**

The following highlights were given:

- Cathy Cimbalo introduced Brian Thomson who spoke about the Self Assessment Team Report.
- As a necessary mandate DCS (Department of Children's Services) is required to look at their past data over the last 3 years and to prepare a self improvement report to go before the Board of Supervisors by April, 2006.
- The areas focused on were: recurrence of abuse; fairness and equity; timeliness for adoption; and improve ILP outcomes.
- It appears that the number of reports is up on recurrence of abuse.
- The Federal guidelines for adoption are 24 months.
- The Department has expanded the Equity and Fairness training for the ILP youth and as developed a Youth Advisory Board.

- Brian mentioned that an area they plan to pay close attention to is the rate of foster care re-entry.
- Small work groups are reviewing the strategic plan and preparing it for the next review process.
- Kathy Watkins mentioned that purpose behind this report was the legislative branch based the bill AB 636 to address resources, funding gaps, goals, and targets to be met by the counties. Kathy mentioned this is the opportunity to for the counties to be heard, and some of the Governor's budget was directed as well to the efforts.

**Key points:
Discussion/
Action
Requested to
move forward
with 2006
Group Home
Needs
Assessment**

The following highlights were given:

- Two items were distributed: Group Home Policy History and Children's Network: Children's Policy Council Group Home Needs Assessment Summary.
- Kathy Watkins mentioned that the last Group Home Needs Survey was done in 2004. She stated that they are usually performed every other year.
- The Group Home Needs Assessment covers a rather impressive variety of data and Kathy stated thanks to Cathy Cimbalo the survey will be sent to Group Home providers in Riverside County.
- Kathy mentioned in the past her staff has found that placement workers do not like to fill out surveys, so this year they are going to conduct focus groups in the regions and will be contacting Department heads to ask for representation at the meetings.
- Other areas they plan to look at this year are; geo-mapping of homes, the outcome experience of children placed over a period of time, maltreatment rates re-entry of foster care, review of serious incident reports from facilities, impact on neighborhood, and how well providers are meeting the children's needs.
- Julian Weaver suggested contacting Bernadette Pinchback at (909) 433-4889 of Foster Youth Services to get the perspective for foster youth in the education system. Julian stated Bernadette would be able to share the end of the year report that shows primary goals for the program, accomplishments, standards for the state, and level of services.
- Allan Rawland asked Kathy Watkins to forward the instrument to him. He is particularly interested in organization characteristics, type of contractors and funding, and types of treatment provided at the group homes.
- Kathy stated from the beginning to end it takes six months for a deliverable report that will be brought back to Policy Council in July for approval and forwarding to the Board of Supervisors.
- Kent mentioned the report is very helpful especially, when there becomes a need for specialized beds.

- Kent thanked Julian Weaver for sharing their report, “Foster Youth Services, San Bernardino County Group Homes April 2005”, which is a listing of group homes that have School Linked Programs.
- *DBH has current contracts with 3 group homes. The DBH staff conduct three types of audits on our contractors fiscal, program and Medi-cal.* It was mentioned that this information needs to be incorporated into the report.
- Sandra Baxter mentioned the County as a placement agency has some sense of the group homes being adequate or not. Basically, the County is on the line to place the children in good group homes.
- Kathy mentioned another focus group they plan to have this year will involve attorneys, court officers, and bench officers, who are involved with placement issues around group homes. Judge McGuire mentioned he would support the effort and get there whomever Kathy needs.

**Key points:
Discussion/
Action
Requested to
Review the
Group Home
Letters of
Support
Process**

The following highlights were given:

- In March of 2000 the Board of Supervisors became the deciding body for Letters of Support to the State Department of Social Services.
- The group home provider must get letters of impact from the local community and those go together as a package to the IPC (Inter-placement Council). This council meets and discusses and forwards their recommendation to Kent for further action.
- In April of 2004 the Board of Supervisors approved a Moratorium on Letters of Support for New Group Home Programs and the RFA process was set up for specialized residential treatment beds.
- In September 2005, the Moratorium on group home letters of support was rescinded on existing group home programs in the First Supervisorial District only.
- Kent had a meeting with placement staff, because of some confusion.
- Basically, it was mentioned that a letter of support is still needed for expansion, relocation, and for any new group home.
- It was mentioned that 70% of the group homes are located in the valley and 10% are in the desert.
- We still to address to group homes need to approach the IPC committee first, before coming to Policy Council.
- There was discussion about how many beds are really needed by San Bernardino county children.
- Kent mentioned the Group Home Needs Assessment helps set policy and evaluates the needs for beds in this county.
- It was mentioned how important it is to work with the community in placing group homes, especially for the special needs placements such as those that are developmentally disabled.
- There was some discussion about other programs DCS and DBH are

working on such as TBS, Wraparound, and family-to-family, so the children can remain at home with services, rather than going to a group home placement.

- It was mentioned that some work is being done now on an RFP for RCL 14.
- Kent mentioned as a footnote the March 1st Countywide Gangs and Drugs presentation at 7:30 a.m. will have a presentation on adult and youth group homes by Kent and Ralph Ortiz.

**Key points:
Other**

The following highlights were given:

- Allan Rawland distributed the Community Services and Supports Plan Executive Summary and the County of San Bernardino Mental Health Services Act Program Funding Requests. Both items were on the MHSA.
- The items distributed give more details on the MHSA.
- The next steps are: the 30 day review; public hearing; presentation to the Mental Health Commission on February 2nd; Board of Supervisors Agenda item on February 7th; and then document goes to the State for the 90 day review.
- Allan mentioned the MHSA funds would be spent on the uninsured and underserved. The target population will be people of color because they seem to have the most needs unmet.
- Allan stated they plan to spend up to \$10,000 per child, which is well above what is spent now.
- There will be 270 slots for Wraparound now for the needy, for those who do not qualify for Medi-Cal.
- Allan mentioned a plan they are working on is to develop 318 housing units for the transition age youths, sober living adults, and detox. He intends to leverage funding through the Housing Authority, and the Governor's Initiative.
- Allan mentioned so far, the State has only approved Stanislaus MHSA's plan.
- Allan mentioned there would be 4 sets of review the MHSA plan before he will have to go to Sacramento to defend it for San Bernardino County.
- Dr. Greene spoke about a program at Cal State that was originated at UCI where families work together with a psychologist through an 8-week behavior class. **Dr. Greene will get the information on the program to Allan Rawland.**
- Kent spoke about Cuidar and the theory of observe children in a classroom setting.
- Judge McGuire told Allan Rawland he and his staff did a terrific job on the MHSA.
- Kent mentioned he and Richard Jarvis along with Supervisor Biane

would be having a press conference on the Annual Report on February 1st.

- Kent reminded everyone that the Shine the Light on Child Abuse Prevention Awards Breakfast is March 23rd is at 7:30 a.m. at the Ontario Doubletree. Kent directed everyone to the nomination form and encouraged members to fill out their nomination form and get him or her in by February 15th.
- Dr. Greene mentioned that at ARMC they were able to get from a manufacture 100,000 free doses of a flu vaccine that will be administered through the County Superintendent School System.

**Key points:
Public
Comment**

The following highlights were given:

- No comment
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Next meeting

February 22, 2006 at noon
